

for Pavel. Escape from the barracks seemed easy, but I was rapidly losing strength. I could not sleep at night, was half dizzy in the daytime, and wondered whether I had caught typhus after all. A week went by. At last a guard came to Ward No. 1 and called me. "Can you stand up? A pal of yours has come to see you."

With a great effort I reached the window on the corridor. Isaac, a member of our organization from the flour mill, stood outside. He told me that the comrades in the Castle asked me to wait. I replied that I could not wait much longer. If Pavel did not join me in two days, I would report for transfer back to the prison. The next day was almost unbearable. In late afternoon the guard touched my shoulder. "Your pal is here again. Can you crawl?"

Isaac was under the window with a small bag in his hands, a cigarette between his lips. He handed the bag to the guard for inspection and asked him if prisoners were permitted to smoke. "The doctor does not like the smell but they may smoke at the window," the guard replied. Isaac handed him a package of cigarettes and passed me the one held between his lips, explaining, "This one is lighted."

Back in my bed, I unrolled the cigarette. The message was in the mouthpiece: "Nobody will come. Go alone. Will wait for you at the corner, Sunday and Monday after 10:00 P.M."

Sunday was Easter, so the guards, like many other people in the city, would be drunk. The timing was good!

There were two routes: through the window, if both guards were on the corridor; through the door, if the corridor guard left his post. Now I must choose the right moment and the right direction.

But I was very weak. First I had to get a little food and some rest. That night colored Easter eggs were distributed to the patients, even those who were unconscious. I had plenty of food but I could not sleep.

On Sunday people were coming and going. In the afternoon all four guards established themselves in the corridor just in front of the ward, with a generous supply of vodka. They drank and treated the nurses and the assistant surgeon. One guard played the balalaika, the other sang and danced. Then a quarrel broke out, all shouted at the same time, the women screamed.

Finally the noise subsided. The two guards who were not on duty left. One of the other two returned to his beat under the window. I saw the glow of his cigarette as he paced back and forth in the darkness. The fourth guard put a bench across the entrance door in the corridor and sat with his head sunk on his knees. I went up to him. He was asleep, the passage to freedom was clear, but I could